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INFO RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 1045

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PTER

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Amia

FOR IT - IRAN UNIT

ATTN: SSA TOM RICE

E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: PREL, PTER, LE, AR

SUBJECT: TEXT OF S/CT COORDINATOR'S COMMENTS IN BUENOS AIRES ON HIZBALLAH

REF: (A) FAX - BUENOS AIRES 9/19/94 (NOTAL); (B) FBI 131955 (NOTAL); (C) BEIRUT 4837 (NOTAL)

1. (LOU) PARAS 2-3 CONTAIN RESPONSE TO F.B.I. REQUEST FOR S/CT COORDINATOR PHILIP C. WILCOX'S REMARKS ON THE HIZBOLLAH MADE DURING A PRESS CONFERENCE IN THE AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES ON SEPTEMBER 7 (REF A). WILCOX'S REMARKS PROMPTED FRONT PAGE COVERAGE BY LEBANESE DAILIES OF THE HIZBALLAH SPOKESMAN'S DENIAL OF HIZBALLAH INVOLVEMENT. LOCAL ARGENTINE DAILIES HIGHLIGHTED THE EXCERPTS BELOW, FOCUSING ON THE HIZBALLAH AND IRAN CONNECTION.

2. (U) BEGIN TEXT (EXCERPT WILCOX PRESS CONFERENCE) .
Q: (UNKNOWN MEDIA) CAN WE AFFIRM OR DISCARD CONNECTIONS AMONG BOMBINGS IN PANAMA, ENGLAND, THE UNITED STATES AND OUR COUNTRY. SECONDLY, DO YOU RELY ON THE DEPOSITION MADE BY THE REPENTANT MOTAMER BEFORE JUDGE GALEANO AND TO WHAT EXTENT COULD IRANIANS AND SYRIANS BE INVOLVED IN

AMIA BOMBING?

A: (U) WE DO INDEED SEE A BOND AMONG THE ATTACKS IN

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J OLSON
DATE/CASE ID: 22 JAN 2009 200705645

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BUENOS AIRES IN PANAMA AND IN LONDON. WE BELIEVE AND THERE IS A GROWING BODY OF EVIDENCE THAT THESE CRIMINAL ACTS WERE CARRIED OUT BY HIZBOLLAH TERRORISTS. THE NIZBOLLAH HAVE ORGANIZED THEMSELVES AROUND THE WORLD AND THESE THREE CRIMES BEAR THE MARKS OF THE HIZBOLLAH. WITH RESPECT TO IRAN IRAN HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPPORTING AND SPONSORING MANY TERRORIST ACTS AROUND THE WORLD. I INVITE YOU TO LOOK AT A PUBLICATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE CALLED "PATTERNS OF TERRORISM." I HOPE THERE ARE SOME COPIES HERE SO THAT YOU CAN SEE THEM. THAT REPORT DOCUMENTS A RECORD OF CONTINUED IRANIAN SUPPORT FOR ASSASSINATIONS, KIDNAPPINGS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM CRIMES OVER MANY, MANY YEARS. WITH RESPECT THE PERSON YOU MENTIONED, HE IS A REFUGEE AND IT IS TRADITIONAL TO RESPECT THE PRIVACY OF PEOPLE IN REFUGEE STATUS SO I HAVE NO COMMENTS ON HIM. I WOULD ADD THAT WE THINK IT IS VERY LIKELY THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN WOULD HAVE KNOWN, GIVEN ITS PAST & BEHAVIOR, AHEAD OF TIME, ABOUT HEZBOLLAH INVOLVEMENT IN THE AMIA BOMBING.

3. (U) Q: (RADIO DEL PLATA): AFTER AMIA BOMBING IN BUENOS AIRES INVESTIGATIONS PROCEDURES HAVE MADE IN THE REGION OF CIUDAD DEL ESTE (PARAGUAY), IN FOZ DO IGUAZU (BRAZIL) AND A LOT HAS BEEN SAID ABOUT THE SOUTH AMERICAN CONNECTION OF TERRORIST GROUPS. ACCORDING TO THE USG, DO YOU THINK THIS IS SO? IS THE REGION OF CIUDAD DEL ESTE, IGUAZU AND FOZ DO IGUAZU A POINT OF MEETING TERRORIST GROUPS WHERE THESE BOMBINGS ARE PLANNED TO BE CARRIED OUT IN SOUTH AMERICA?

A: (U) I CANNOT COMMENT IN ANY DETAIL ABOUT THE EVIDENCE THAT HAS BEEN GATHERED IN THIS JUDICIAL INVESTIGATION. I CAN SAY, HOWEVER, THAT THERE ARE HIZBOLLAH CELLS IN THE REGION YOU MENTIONED AND ELSEWHERE IN LATIN AMERICA. I WANT TO DISTINGUISH VERY CAREFULLY BETWEEN SMALL GROUPS OF HIZBOLLAH TERRORISTS AND PEACEFUL, PATRIOTIC PEOPLE OF THE ISLAMIC FAITH AND OF ARAB ORIGIN WHO ARE CITIZENS OF LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES. THE HEZBOLLAH IS A TINY MINORITY WHICH DOES NOT SPEAK FOR THE ISLAMIC COMMUNITY. THEY DISGUISE THEMSELVES UNDER THE CLOAK OF RELIGION TO COMMIT TERRIBLE CRIMES.
END TEXT.

CHRISTOPHER
BT
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